

THE LANGUAGE OF THE PROFESSORS:



Latin/Danish code-switching around 1600

By Peter Zeeberg

Among bilinguals code-switching, the mixing of languages, is extremely common, especially in spoken language, but also in writing. This phenomenon has been studied extensively over the last decennia in bilingual communities all over the world. The present article looks into a similar bilingual community in the past, namely sixteenth and seventeenth-century academics, who were as fluent in Latin as in the vernacular. The source material for the study is taken from the minutes of the professors' assembly, the consistorium, at the University of Copenhagen, 1599–1608. These texts are written partly in Danish, partly in Latin, and partly in a mixture of the two. Some passages may reflect the words actually spoken at the meetings, but in general it is advisable to consider the material as written language. The code-switching is in many ways typical of a bilingual community, but it also demonstrates the different roles of the two languages within this community.

Vnd kan ich *propriâ experientia edoctus* in warheit sagen *quod coniugia sint fatalia*.

(Thus, I can, *from my own experience*, say for sure *that marriages are ruled by fate*.¹)

The words were written in 1604 by the Hamburg printer and bookseller Georg Ludwig Froben in his unfinished and only partially preserved memoirs.² The manuscript is in German, but here, at the emotional point where he recounts how he found his wife, he switches from German into Latin twice in a single sentence.

¹ In this, and in all the following examples of mixed language, Latin text and the corresponding parts of the translations are printed in italics.

² *Bruchstück aus der eigenhändig geschriebenen Lebensgeschichte Herrn Georg Ludwig Froben*, Royal Library, Copenhagen, NKS 2596 fol. Cf. Zeeberg 2003.

This is an example of what is today normally termed code-switching, a phenomenon that has received a great deal of attention in linguistic circles, especially over the last thirty years.³ It has become clear that code-switching is to be found in all bilingual communities. The mixing of languages, both below sentence level (intra-sentential code-switching) and on sentence level (inter-sentential code-switching) is extremely common, especially in conversation between bilinguals, but also in writing.

With globalisation, greater mobility and increasing immigration the phenomenon has become more present over the last decades. But it has always been there. A classic example in Denmark is what was once called ‘spritbådsdansk’ or ‘spritbådstysk’: a mixture of Danish and German spoken in the border area, which was likened to the tax-free ferries that previously ran back and forth between the countries. The term ‘booze-cruise Danish’ is characteristically pejorative. Code-switching has traditionally been viewed as an example of language degeneration. But modern research has shown that on the contrary it is “an index of bilingual proficiency.”⁴ The true bilingual can operate freely in both languages separately – *and* in certain contexts and situations in a refined mix of both languages. Code-switching is a natural part of being bilingual.

And bilingual is exactly what learned people were in the early modern period. Froben was a learned man with a thorough Latin education. There is no reason to doubt that he both spoke and wrote Latin as fluently as his mother-tongue, High German. When speaking or writing, such a person would always have a choice to make between (in this case) the two languages he mastered, depending on many factors: the audience, the situation, the topic etc.

In many cases the choice was easy. A learned book should be in Latin. A letter to your mum should be in the vernacular. In other cases, it was more complex. Latin could be chosen for its prestige, as a social signal, to include an international audience, to exclude un-initiated readers etc.; the vernacular for a number of other reasons. And in certain contexts, as we have seen, a mixed language would be a possibility. An obvious case for that is private correspondence between bilinguals.

But if you want to go deeper into the psychology of language choice, you need to study informal texts, texts written without thought for conventions or the demands of an audience. One such text has been studied by Minna Skaft Jensen, namely the almanac notes of Peder Hegelund (1542–1614), bishop of Ribe in Jutland, Denmark.⁵ According to this study the overall picture was

³ For an introduction to the topic see Bullock & Toribio 2009.

⁴ Bullock & Toribio 2009, 1, cf. Muysken 2000, 2.

⁵ Skaft Jensen 2004, 111–114.

that in his youth as a student in Germany Hegelund wrote almost exclusively Latin, but back home in Ribe, in a Danish-speaking community, Danish gradually took over without ever ousting Latin completely. German, Greek and Hebrew had minor roles. Another finding was that the languages had a tendency to follow the topic. Especially, academic topics are in Latin while notes about daily life are in Danish as we find it in May 1578:

12. *Scripsi Mathiæ Vinitori Typographo de Susanna imprimenda, misi x ioachimicos* ved Anders Oluffsen.

20. Fick ieg saltfisk hiem fra Mandø ...⁶

(12. *I wrote to Mads Vingaard, the printer, about the printing of Susanna [a play] and sent 10 thaler* by Anders Olufsen. 20. I got salted fish home from Mandø ...)

When we find code-switching in informal written texts as Hegelund's it seems inevitable that the same feature could be found in the *spoken* language within the same milieu. On this point, however, the sources are very scarce. But we do have a few instances of notes from meetings and the like which may reflect the actual spoken language. The most convincing example is Luther's *Tischreden*, mealtime conversations, that were recorded in writing by friends who dined with him. These have been examined in a classic study by Birgit Stolt, in which she shows and scrupulously analyses a very high degree of code-switching.⁷

Here we shall look into a somewhat similar material from Denmark, namely the minutes of the *consistorium* at the University of Copenhagen. The *consistorium* was the professors' assembly, which functioned both as the governing body of the university and as the country's academic court. Before 1599 only fragments and various excerpts from the minutes have been preserved, but from June 1599 the original minute books are extant at the Danish National Archives with only one volume (1724–1748) missing. Basis for the following small study are the two volumes which cover the period 1599–1608,⁸ and only in a few instances the earlier fragments. For the sake of convenience, I have mostly used Holger Frederik Rørdam's printed edition, which covers the entire fragment material known to Rørdam⁹ and extensive excerpts from the extant volumes.¹⁰

⁶ Kaae 1976.

⁷ Stolt 1964.

⁸ The Danish National Archives (Rigsarkivet), Copenhagen, *Acta Consistorii* (1566–1911), pk. 4 (1599–1604, 1203–02) & pk. 5 (1604–1608, 1203–03 – 1203–04).

⁹ Rørdam 1857–1859, Rørdam 1869–1871.

¹⁰ Rørdam 1895–1897a, Rørdam 1895–1897b.

The writing in the extant volumes is so uniform and has so few corrections that this cannot have been written directly at the meetings. This must be a fair copy made from notes taken during the proceedings. Later in the seventeenth century the minutes are provided exclusively in Danish, but in this early material we find a mixture of Danish and Latin. Whether this means that the spoken language changed, or the standards of the written minutes changed we cannot say for certain, but the latter seems most likely. In the early material from 1599 till 1608 some passages – the largest part – are in Danish with only a few Latin words. Other parts are exclusively in Latin, and others still are written in a mixed language with frequent code-switching. From 1598, e.g., we have a case of students being harassed in the streets by courtiers and seamen. The rector concludes:

*Deberent potius ferre quam inferre injuriam, Bliffue hiemme præsertim noctu in suis cubiculis, och icke komme nogen vnder Øyne med forsett, som de kunde komme vdj trette med, och ellers sky theris Selskaff och Omgengsell, quibus scirent esse otiosum studiosorum nomen, ...*¹¹

(They should rather endure harm than do harm, stay at home, especially at night, in their rooms, and not deliberately face people they might fall foul of, and in general avoid the company of those people about whom they knew that they hated all students, ...)

This is a typical case of code-switching. And presumably it reflects the language spoken at the meeting. The secretary or *notarius* (normally one of the junior professors¹²) would hardly have translated spoken pure Latin or Danish into a written mixture of the two languages. It seems more probable that the monolingual passages at least to some degree present an edited version of a more mixed spoken language. But, of course, reflecting is not the same as reproducing. The transformation from spoken word to writing unavoidably involves some degree of editing. This is confirmed by the fact that Stolt found quite another level of mixture in Luther's *Tischreden*. There the languages were closely interwoven in ways that we do not find in our material. German pronouns were combined with Latin nouns (e.g. "Mein *Theologiam*", "alle *locos*"), and German adjectives were used as attributes to Latin nouns.¹³ She even found Latin nouns with German definite articles,¹⁴ but that would not be possible in Danish, where the articles are enclitic. If a similar language was spoken at the University in Copenhagen, the minutes

¹¹ 1 Sept. 1598, Rørdam 1857–1859, 66.

¹² Rørdam 1868–1874 2, 670–672; Rørdam 1868–1874 3, 650–662.

¹³ Stolt 1964, 125, 129.

¹⁴ Stolt 1964, 131.

have revised it into something less complicated. But at some points you get the feeling that the text is close to what was actually said:

Klagett ViceRector om den store wskickelighed med *Studiosis*, att de siden S. Hans Dag haffde opdruckitt 16 eller 18 t^r Tyskøll,
[...]
Vocatus est Henricus Norwegianus; interrogatus, an dederat Symbolam.
Resp.: non.
Quoties interfuit, rogatus.
R. Tres dies, Dominica, Visitationis et ante Octiduum.
Quot tonnas ebiberunt?
R. 1 huer dag.
Quot essent?
R. fire 30.
R. Resenius: eratis 26.
Quis author esset conuiuorum.
R. Jeg ued dett icke.¹⁵

(The vice-rector complained about the unseemliness of *the students*, in that they since midsummer had drunk 16 or 18 casks of German beer ... *Henrik the Norwegian was called in and asked whether he had contributed.*
Answer: No.
How often had he participated, he was asked.
Answer: Three days, Sunday, the Visitation of the Virgin and a week before.
How many casks had they drunk?
Answer: One per day.
How many were they?
Answer: Thirty-four.
Resen: You were Twenty-six.
Who was the instigator of these parties?
Answer: I don't know.)

Such a passage may well, at least in some details, represent the actual words that were spoken. The case is presented in Danish. The interrogation of the culprit is held in formal Latin, but three times the nervous student lapses into Danish. The questions are given in *oratio obliqua*, but the answers are in direct speech, and so is the sharp objection by (Hans Poulsen) Resen, the professor of theology, when the young man tries to diminish his own drinking by enlarging the number of drinkers. The odd spelling of the number 34 (“fire 30”) may well be the result of a simultaneous taking down of the spoken word

¹⁵ 6 July 1604, Rørdam 1895–1897b, 513–514. The line breaks are mine.

as in Danish units go before the tens, so 4 is pronounced before the 30 (fireogtredive).

Other examples (with *oratio recta* in Danish):

... *violenta manu Pedellum detinebant a proposito, adeoque violentas manus inferre volebant, ita ut rediens clamaret: de wille sla mig ihiel.*¹⁶

(... *they violently kept the caretaker from doing what he had planned, and they were so intent on laying hands on him that when he came back he cried: They were going to kill me!*)

Proponerede Magnificus om Peder Galt, som uar relægerit, oc hans tiid var ude. *Quid faciendum? Responsum: commendet se præceptori suo privato.* Om hand motte admitteris tiill kosten, som var dett meste. *Responsum: Saa maa hand skicke sig.*¹⁷

(The rector submitted the case of Peder Galt, who had been expelled, and his time was up. *What should be done? Answer: He must commit himself to the care of his private tutor.* Whether he might be admitted to the meals, which was the most important thing? *Answer: Then he will have to behave!*)

The first example quotes a remark from a witness in *oratio recta*. In all likelihood this can be regarded as the words that were actually spoken. The last words in the second example (“Saa maa hand skicke sig”) sound very much like an impatient exclamation. But there is no way to prove it. In some instances, the choice of language seems to reflect what actually went on at the meeting, without being *oratio recta*, as in the following. The professors treat the case of a certain Oluf Brender, who is in debt. The entire text in Latin until:

... *Comparuit pro fratre Jacobus, som undskyllede M. Oluff, hand var icke hieme, men var ventendes i morgen. Concl. Dett skall opstaa, indtill hand kommer hiem.*¹⁸

(*His brother Jakob entered, who apologised for Master Oluf. He was not at home but was expected back tomorrow. Conclusion: This must stand over till he comes home.*)

The brother, who was a burgher and a member of the city council in Copenhagen,¹⁹ presumably spoke Danish. And that is reflected in a change of

¹⁶ 19. Aug. 1603, Rørdam 1895–1897, 111.

¹⁷ 3 Oct. 1604, Rørdam 1895–1897b, 518.

¹⁸ 27 June 1599, Rørdam 1895–1897a, 72.

¹⁹ Rørdam 1868–1874 2, 713.

language in the minutes. But the opposite is also found. In some instances, the language written is clearly not the same as was spoken:

Niels Monsøns Quinde, Buolld i Clarup gaardtt, kom ind oc sagde, hurledes hun var fraa hannom kommen: først laa hun y laenn *eius metu*, oc siden drog hun tiill Skourideren Christoffer och bad hannom, at hand uillde følge [hende til] hannom, *et quomodo ejecta fuisset ab illo, qui noluit illam recipere*.²⁰

(Niels Monsen's woman Boel from the farm Klarup entered and told how she had escaped him. At first she lay in the barn *for fear of him*, and later she went to the forest supervisor Christoffer asking him to accompany her to him, *and how she had been sent away by him as he would not take her back*.)

The entire passage is an account of what the woman told the *consistorium*. And as a peasant woman we can be absolutely sure that she spoke nothing but Danish. Nevertheless, parts of the account are in Latin. This therefore is the secretary's code-switching, not a reflection of the spoken language.

Thus, although it is indisputable that the mixed language in the minutes reflects a spoken language with similar code-switching, we cannot take the minutes as a source for spoken language. Some passages have clearly been edited harder than others, e.g. into pure Latin. Such passages must be further removed from the actual spoken words than passages in mixed language. But that does not mean that the mixed passages are a precise rendering of the spoken words. In some instances, where remarks are quoted in *oratio recta*, it may well be the case, but in general the safe attitude to this material is to take it as written language.²¹

In the following we shall take a closer look at the code-switching we find in this material, using the categories proposed by Pieter Muysken: *insertion*, *alternation* and *congruent lexicalisation*.²²

Insertion is when a word or phrase (typically a noun or noun phrase) is inserted into a sentence in another language (the matrix language):

Rector ... wilde y fremthiden planthe ther en Hortum Medicum hoss.²³

(In the future the rector intended to plant a *medicine garden* near there.)

Rector and *Hortum Medicum* are a Latin noun and a Latin noun phrase embedded in the matrix language Danish. This example immediately shows

²⁰ 27 July 1608, Rørdam 1895–1897b, 798.

²¹ Historic code-switching in writing is a rather new field of study. See Sebba, Mahootian & Jonsson 2012.

²² Muysken 2000. Muysken uses the term 'code-mixing', while reserving 'code-switching' for a more limited sense, namely the category congruent lexicalisation.

²³ 12 July 1600, Rørdam 1895–1897a, 90.

an obvious difficulty with insertion as a type of code-switching. The word *rector* is of course Latin, but it is also a loanword in Danish. It could just as well have occurred in a purely Danish text. *Hortum Medicum* is different. This is clearly Latin as it is declined in Latin. But actually, Latin loanwords were normally declined in Latin even in purely Danish texts. A random example from an approximately contemporaneous text, Anders Arrebo's poem *Hexaameron* (1618):

Nu *Naso*, hiid din Pen, igiennem torfver grønne,
O at du underjords din *venam* vild' ej sønne,
Men i et Øjeblik min *Musæ* den forlæne,
Da hun med urte-strøø dit grafsted skulde tiene.²⁴

(Now, *Naso*, hand me your pen through the green turf. / I hope you will not keep your [poetic] *vein* underground, / but for a moment hand it over to my *muse* / as she is going to sprinkle your grave with herbs.)

Vena and *Musa* are both declined in Latin, in the accusative and the dative respectively, according to their function within the Danish syntax. And that is quite normal in Danish until at least the eighteenth century. A random example from our material:

... ett bref aff Helmstads Uniuersitett til *Vniuersitatem* om *Christiano Fabricio* om nogen giæld, ...²⁵

(... a letter from the University of Helmstedt to *the university* about *Christian Fabricius* about some debt)

Such single noun insertions abound in this material. Words like *rector*, *professor* and *cancellarius* do not appear in Danish versions in this material (although some of them do have Danish equivalents). They are used in Latin and declined in Latin whether the matrix language is Latin or Danish, and therefore they should be regarded as loanwords in Danish. But insertion of more complicated structures is just as common, be it noun phrases or prepositional phrases:

D. Resenius sagde sig att haffue verrit huos *Mag:m Dominum Cancellarium*, som talde om *Versione Bibliorum*, ...²⁶

(Dr. Resen announced that he had visited *his excellency the Chancellor*, who talked about *the translation of the Bible*, ...)

²⁴ Arrebo 1965–1968 1, 180.

²⁵ 16 July 1603, Rørdam 1895–1897a, 108.

²⁶ 26 Oct. 1604, ms. In the Danish National Archives, see note 8.

H. Jørgens Syster paa Amager er sprungen y en brønd; hannem er forløffuet att begraffue hinde *in angulo quodam Cæmiterij*.²⁷

(Mr. Jørgen's sister in Amager has jumped into a well, he has been allowed to bury her *in a corner of the cemetery*.)

Danish loanwords in Latin do not occur. And in general, Danish insertions in Latin text are rare. But they do occur:

Conquestum est de petulantia et improbitate Studiosorum quorundam, qui potaverant in ædibus Matthiæ Francisci paa Nørregaade.²⁸

(*There was a complaint about some impudent and shameless students who had been drinking in the house of Mads Frandsen in Nørregade [a street in Copenhagen]*)

Likewise, we find some stock phrases like:

Seorsim admonendus, ut a mensa se contineat ad aliquot dies, thill videre beskedem.²⁹

(*He should be told to stay away from the table for some days, until further notice*.)

Alternation implies a shift from one language to another. Consider the following:

Sed tandem illuc venit (Dibvadio negante simpliciter), at di in gratiam Magnifici Domini Cancellarii villde tillade hende dette vden festing,
...³⁰

(*Finally, the result was (although Dybvad denied it completely) that they – to please his excellency the chancellor – would allow her this without a fee*.)

The shift from Latin in the main clause to Danish in the subordinate clause is a case of alternation while a Latin prepositional phrase (*in gratiam ... Cancellarii*) is inserted into a Danish context. Other examples:

Om skoolmesteren y Malmøe, om hand icke skulle hid convoceris *et edere confessionem suæ fidei, cum sit suspectæ fidei*.³¹

(About the schoolmaster in Malmö whether he should be called over here *and read the Creed as his faith is under suspicion*.)

²⁷ 22 Dec. 1599, Rørdam 1895–1897a, 83–84.

²⁸ 14 July 1604, Rørdam 1895–1897b, 514.

²⁹ 27 Oct. 1599, Rørdam 1895–1897a, 81.

³⁰ 19 April 1605, ms. in the Danish National Archives, see note 8.

³¹ 30 July 1603, Rørdam 1895–1897a, 109.

*Aderat studiosus quidam Michael antehac furiosus oc haffde slagett Dñi Episcopi vinduer vd; petiit mensam in Communitate. Consilium dabatur ipsi, hand skulle giffue sig til ett Handverck, cum nec posset fieri minister, neque diaconus.*³²

(A student by the name of Michael appeared who had previously been quite mad and had knocked out the bishop's windows; he applied for free meals. He was advised to learn a trade as he could neither become a vicar nor a parish clerk.)

These are examples of real shifts between the languages, where arguably the matrix language changes (in some instances more than once). But it is important to emphasise that such examples are relatively rare. In general, mixed passages tend to have Danish as matrix language as in the following:

*Studiosus Johannes Martini Petraftanus Vdby Jesuvita er atter begierind att maa læse. Recitabat Pro-Rector verba Foundationis: Att de, som kommer ex Scholis exteris et Academiis, skulle før offuerhøris a facultate theologica, an sint sinceræ religionis etc. Och effterdy hand kom non solum ex peregrinis sed Jesuvticis academiis, burde hand jo billig att offuerhøris, och erbød sig daa Dn. Pro-Rector Resenius et D. Dibvadius, att de gerne ville conferere med hanom och examinere hanom, om hand vor sincerus in articulis Christianæ religionis, om hand vilde komme til denom, paa dett de kunde liberare conscientiam, och siden vilde de commendare ipsum Academiæ juxta foundationem.*³³

(The student Johannes Mortensen Petraftanus [from] Udby, a Jesuit, once more asks for permission to study. The pro-rector recited the words of the charter: That persons who arrive from foreign schools and universities should be examined by the Faculty of Theology whether they are of true faith etc. And as he has arrived not only from foreign but from Jesuit universities he ought to be examined, and thus the pro-rector Resen and Dr. Dybvad offered to confer with him and examine him whether he was faithful to the articles of the Christian faith, whether he would come to them so that they could free his conscience, and after that they would commend him to the University according to the charter.)

³² 28 Nov. 1604, Rørdam 1895–1897b, 520.

³³ 17 Dec. 1603, ms. in the Danish National Archives, see note 8.

Apart from *recitabat* all main verbs in this passage are Danish. There are a few subordinate clauses and one main clause in Latin which may well be described as alternation, but the general picture is that the text is in Danish.

The two first categories demonstrate a difference between the two languages. Alternation can be found in both directions, Latin to Danish and Danish to Latin. Latin insertion is extremely common in Danish matrix language while Danish insertion in Latin is rare.

The third category, *congruent lexicalisation*, is the situation where two languages share a common grammatical structure. Such an agreement cannot be expected between two structurally so different languages as Danish and Latin, the basic difference being that Danish syntax relies basically on word order while Latin syntax relies on inflection. But consider the last part of the previous example:

... om hand vilde komme til denom, paa dett de kunde *liberare conscientiam*, och siden vilde de *commendare ipsum Academiae juxta foundationem*.

This sentence is basically Danish. The word order is exactly what we would expect from a Danish sentence, and all the embedded Latin constituents are placed according to Danish word order, rather than standard Latin word order. The linguistic structures are not common as in congruent lexicalisation but *harmonised*.³⁴ In standard Latin the word order would have been markedly different (e.g. object-infinitive-modal verb as opposed to modal verb-infinitive-object). Another example:

In hoc casu haffde *Magnificus* sendt *pedellos* til *Dibuadium*, att hand skulle selffuer *comparere in persona*, *nec posse ipsum agere per schedulam*, *quam miserat*. Dennom suarede *D. Dibuadius*, att hand gad icke gaa vdt.³⁵

(*In this case* the [rector] *magnificus* had sent the *caretakers* to *Dybvad* [to announce] that he had to *appear in person*, and that he could not *plead his case by means of the paper he had sent*. Dr. *Dybvad* answered them that he could not go out.)

Again the word order is Danish – up until *in persona*. At this point the matrix language switches, and until *miserat* the structure is Latin with a very Latin accusative and infinitive, thus demonstrating sensitivity to avoiding clashes between different structures. The same phenomenon was found in Froben's words "Vnd kan ich *propriâ experientia edoctus* in warheit sagen *quod coniugia sint fatalia*," where the *quod*-sentence has been chosen instead of an

³⁴ Cf. Mark Sebba on 'harmonisation' in Sebba 2009, 48.

³⁵ 12 July 1606, ms. In the Danish National Archives, see note 8.

accusative and infinitive in compliance with the practices of German. In the minutes a Danish declarative verb ('siger', 'sagde' etc.) is never followed directly by Latin *oratio obliqua*, while the opposite is quite common:

*Respondit Resenius, att hand haffde giffuit tiill Schuolen 500 thr.*³⁶

(*Resen answered that he had given 500 thaler to the school.*)

A similar difference can be noticed in the case of prepositions. We have already met several examples of Danish prepositions with Latin (inflected) nouns. But Latin prepositions with Danish nouns are not found. The same phenomenon was found by Birgit Stolt in Luther's *Tischreden*.³⁷ She explained it with the problem of what to do with the German articles after a Latin preposition, especially as German definite articles have a tendency to be fused with the prepositions (e.g. *in dem* > *im*). This is different in Danish as Danish articles are not inflected, and definite articles are enclitic, but it may still have felt awkward either combining a Latin preposition with an article or using a Danish noun without an article.

Another explanation may be found in the fact that Danish nouns are not inflected, apart from plural and genitive. A person who had learned Latin would expect a Latin preposition to be followed by a noun in a certain case. Therefore, a Danish preposition with an inflected Latin noun is allowed while a Latin preposition with a Danish noun is not. We are dealing with an environment where rules of grammar and syntax are primarily, or even exclusively, bound to one of the languages, namely Latin. To the extent these people thought of grammatical rules for the vernacular, these rules would have been copied from Latin.

An interesting example of Latin lurking below a Danish surface is the following:

*Andreae Toxotis breff bleff læst, quibus excusat ...*³⁸

(*Anders Skytte's letter was read, in which he excuses ...*)

The relative pronoun in plural can only be explained by the fact that the Latin word for letter, *litterae*, is plural.³⁹

Is there a pattern in the code-switching in the minutes of the *consistorium*? The expected answer is that the two languages had different domains, Latin for academic topics, Danish for non-academic topics as we saw it in Peder Hegelund's almanacs. And such a pattern can be observed, at least roughly. Announcements of the appointment of new professors or a new *rector* are

³⁶ 5 Jan. 1605, Rørdam 1895–1897b, 523.

³⁷ Stolt 1964, 137–138.

³⁸ 31 Oct. 1604, Rørdam 1895–1897b, 519.

³⁹ For similar examples from French-Arabic code-switching see Sebba 2009, 53–54.

always in Latin. Discussions about student and their behaviour are generally in Latin. Discussions of agricultural topics are normally in Danish, etc. It is obvious that the availability of technical terms in the two languages is of importance. And in many cases the choice of language may have been influenced by the documents or witnesses that a given case was based on.

This, however, is by no means a rule. In long monolingual passages any topic can be treated. And in mixed passages the switches do often seem completely random, with no relation to the contents:

Resterede 8. gyllden 13 thr., som M. Hans icke haffde udlagt.
*Dubitabatur, an floreni essent communes, an aurei.*⁴⁰

(There remained 8 florins and 13 thalers, which Master Hans had not spent. *It was uncertain whether they were normal florins or florins in gold.*)

Similarly, we may compare the following two entries, two weeks apart:

Indkom Claus Morttenssøn Rigens skriffuer paa Kong. Maitz vegne oc
bar en skreffuen bog *in Consistorium* ...⁴¹

(Claus Mortensen, the clerk of the realm appeared on behalf of the king bringing a book to the consistorium ...)

*Adfuit Claudius Martini Scriba Regni et recitata est ordinatio, quæ
usurpabitur in Regno Norvagiæ* ...⁴²

(Claus Mortensen, the clerk of the realm appeared, and a rule which is to be used in Norway was recited ...).

The same person is described as doing approximately the same thing, but in different languages.

In some cases a switch is caused by a technical term or a stock phrase:

Conclusum, att M. Jonas skall invitere *nomine facultatis, ut oportet, et quemadmodum ante ipsum fecerunt alii.*⁴³

(*It was concluded that Master Jonas shall make the invitation on behalf of the faculty, as it behooves him and as others have one before him.*)

⁴⁰ 5 June 1604, Rørdam 1895–1897a, 125.

⁴¹ 24 April 1607, Rørdam 1895–1897b, 776.

⁴² 6 May 1607, Rørdam 1895–1897b, 776.

⁴³ 22 Febr. 1603, Rørdam 1895–1897a, 105.

*D. Resenius proponerede nomine Uxoris Elsæ defuncti, Joh. Reinholls, qui fuerat tutor liberorum M. Petri Baggæi, quod ...*⁴⁴

(*Doctor Resen put forth on behalf of Else, wife of the late Joh. Reinholls, who had been tutor to the children of Peder Bagge, that ...*)

The Latin phrase *nomine facultatis/Uxoris* slips into a Danish passage, and from there the writer continues in Latin.

But even in passages characterised by a high degree of random switches, some switches seem to reflect the topic in a way similar to what we saw in Peder Hegelund's almanacs. These are apparently subconscious switches where the language changes follow the contents even when no technical terms are involved:

*Item proposuit M. Rector, at en Pige klager paa Jens Valentzued, qui ambit diaconatum.*⁴⁵

(*The rector put forth the case that a girl complains about Jens Vallensved, who is applying for a post as parish clerk.*)

*Otte Pederszøn studiosus, qui alterum occiderat casuali homicidio oc dømbtt tiill bod aff Borremester oc Raad, comparuit, petens scire (ut ante) si posset admitti ad functionem Ecclesiasticam.*⁴⁶

(*Otte Pedersen, a student who had killed another by accident and had been fined by the mayor and the city council, appeared to ask (as previously) whether it would be possible for him to obtain an ecclesiastical office.*)

*Det er mellem bynderne selff, et nihil ad professores.*⁴⁷

(*That is between the peasants themselves, and it does not concern the professors.*)

To sum up: The minutes from the professors' meetings at the University of Copenhagen are important linguistic source material for the language situation among academics *c.* 1600. They are based on spoken language, and some passages may even be more or less precise renderings of spoken words. But on this point a certain cautiousness is advisable.

Even as written texts the minutes afford us a rare glimpse into the day-to-day language situation among the professors at the university. We find a

⁴⁴ 7 March 1604, Rørdam 1895–1897a, 120.

⁴⁵ 15 June 1608, Rørdam 1895–1897b, 796.

⁴⁶ 28 Nov. 1604, Rørdam 1895–1897b, 520.

⁴⁷ 24 Aug. 1603, Rørdam 1895–1897a, 112.

group of true bilinguals. They use Danish and Latin nearly indiscriminately – although with a tendency to choose language according to the topic. And they use code-switching. Here the difference between the languages becomes clear. Alternation between the languages is not uncommon, but the majority of the code-switching consists of the insertion of Latin into Danish. In a Danish-language context Latin words or phrases constantly presented themselves for the writer, ready to be used. Large parts of the minutes were written in Danish, but for these academics with far more Latin than Danish schooling, Latin was never far away.

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(Web-edition: <http://www.phil-hum-ren.uni-muenchen.de/GermLat/Acta/Zeeberg.htm>, last viewed 5 January 2022).

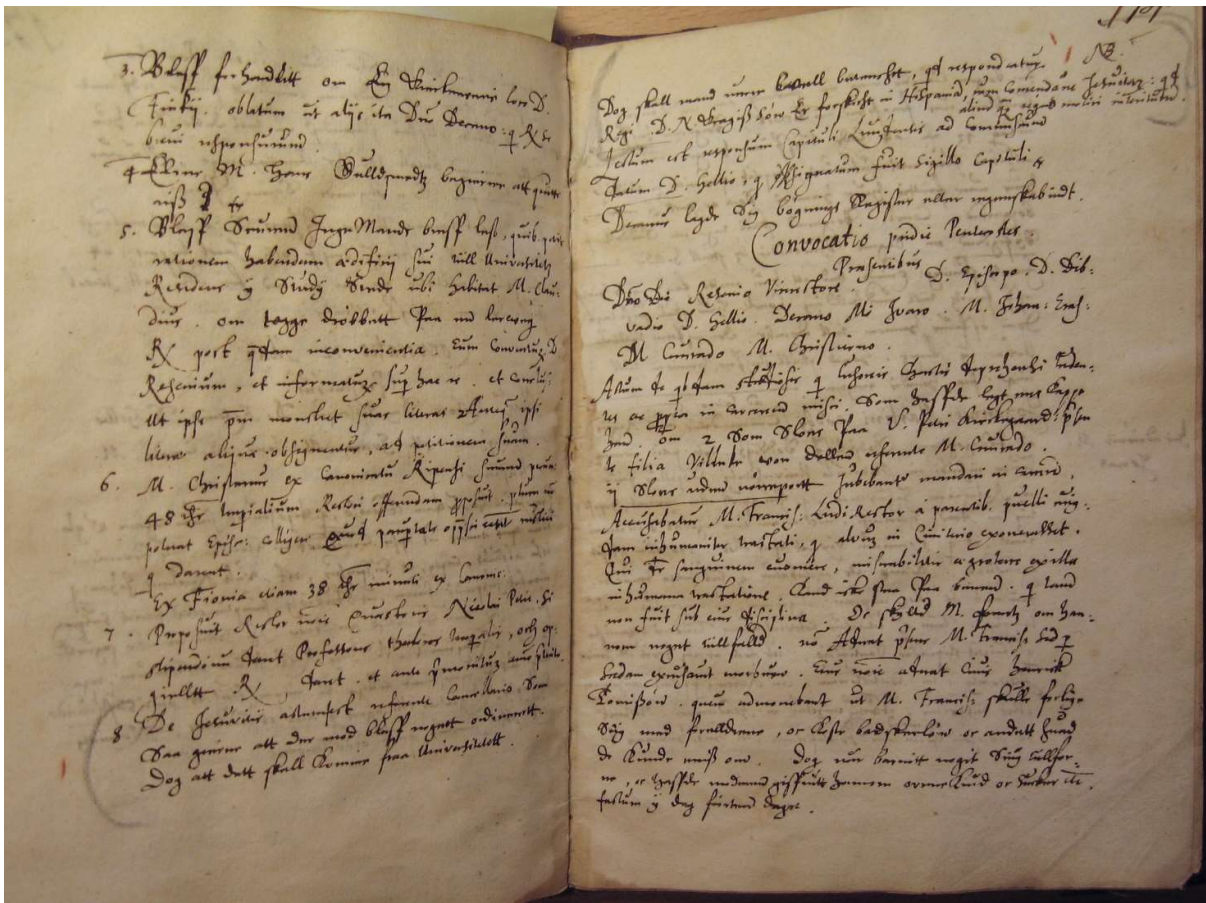


Fig. 1

Acta Consistorii, meetings in May 1604. Under *pridie Pentecostes* (May 26) the text starts: “*Actum de quibusdam studiosis qui lusoreis Chartis deprehensi ludentes ac propterea in carcerem missi. Som haffde legt ens Kappe hen. Om 2, som sloes paa S. Petri Kierkegaard: præsente filia VILLECKE von Dellen referente M. Cunrado. ij sloes uden Nørreport. Jubebantur mandari in carcerem.*” (“The case of some students who had been caught playing cards, and who had therefore been sent to jail. Who had gambled away a gown belonging to of one of them. About two who had been in a fight at S. Peter’s churchyard in the presence of the daughter of Wilke von Dellen, according to Master Konrad. Two were in a fight outside the northern gate. They were sent to jail.” The Danish National Archives, Copenhagen, *Acta Consistorii*, pk. 4, 1599–1604, photo Peter Zeeberg).